

## Grow Out: Outreach Means "GO!"

By Senior Pastor Tom Harrison

Matthew 28:16-20

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Key Focus: "God" begins with GO. God has always been on mission to redeem the lost.

Daniel assisting; John online

We cannot overemphasize God's heart for the whole world. God is missional. Aligning with God gives us missional hearts, too. The Lord's words to Abraham and to the disciples in "The Great Commission" both begin with the same word: "GO." They were told to be proactive, not passive. They were not to wait for others to find them. "GO" was their word. Jesus was literally "on the go." His punch line with the story of Zacchaeus the tax collector was: *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."* The book of Acts tells the mission field: Jerusalem (local), Judea (regional), Samaria (national) and to the ends of the earth (global). Jesus' church incorporates every person and every people group. It begins at home and goes out.

APPLICATION: The Bible has two narratives. One is a "top line" word for personal salvation. The second is a "bottom line" word for mission. How are you doing in relating to these two concepts of personal salvation and witness to others? How can you grow in your witness? Who has God placed on your heart? Remember to pray first.

Thank you for getting/wearing nametags. Guess how many requests we've had? **1,071**.

Please pick them up at the CLC today.

We had a speaker years ago who used 2 illustrations I've always remembered.

1) He had a specially made Bible he used as a gimmick. He had it cut in half. He held up both halves and said there was a top/bottom. He said many Christians have only half of a Bible. They love the Top Line which he said are "personal BLESSINGS." The top line of blessings is essential. If we don't receive, we won't follow Jesus. There are enormous personal benefits from being a Christian: forgiveness of sins; friends (church); the Holy Spirit to comfort, guide and direct me; scripture to direct my life; purpose in life; and eternal life. These "top lines" are all wonderful. However, the point of the sermon = there is "Bottom Line" of personal responsibility, too. He said Abram was given the original (first) Great Commission. Jesus repeated it.

Genesis 12:1-3 *Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

Top line: *I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great... "I will bless those who bless you..."*

Bottom line: *so that you will be a blessing....and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.* So Abram wasn't just blessed for him and his family only – he was a means to an end.

Psalm 72:17-19 *May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in him, all nations call him blessed! <sup>18</sup> Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. <sup>19</sup> Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen!*

Acts 13:47-48 <sup>47</sup> *For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."* <sup>48</sup> *And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord,*

2) He also mentioned "Cat/Dog Theology." It is said a dog has a master, but a cat has staff. We may own a dog, but nobody owns a cat. A dog looks at you and thinks, "You feed me, pet me, shelter me, and love me. YOU

must be god." But a cat looks at you and thinks, "You feed me, pet me, shelter me, and love me – I must be god." Now I love both cats/dogs, so this is only an illustration.

Today's text comes from Matthew 28:16-20. This is called "The Great Commission. "This is what Jesus told His disciples to do before He ascended to heaven. But before we turn there, let's look at the original Great Commission. It was given to Abram.

"Helping Others Follow Jesus," Asbury's Mission Statement is not a "Top Line" Bible or "Cat Theology."

Matthew 28:16-20 (p 993)

*Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

### **3 terms to note:**

**Worship** = what they did. Why? Because of the **Authority** vested in Jesus, God in the flesh who was resurrected.

**Go** = Not sit and wait but be proactive.

**Make Disciples** – Can't help someone be a Disciple unless you are one.

**All nations** – who? "ethne" = the Greek word. We get the word "ethnic" from it. God wants all people to come to a relationship with Him through Jesus Christ. This is what we are charged by Jesus to do.

### **Application:**

Asbury will start a 6-week study on a book "The Magnificent Story" on Sept. 5. The author, James Bryan Smith ("Jim") will preach that Sunday and again in October.

The Magnificent Story is about Jesus. His is THE greatest story ever told. Our stories are not ultimately magnificent, if for no other reason, a Magnificent Story must always end with, "*And they all lived happily ever after.*" We all die.

Instead of having a "Magnificent Story" we end up with "shrunken stories." Some of us have been shrunken by abuse, abandonment, addiction, divorce, emotional or mental health issues, financial distress, or job loss. We all live with limitations and with disappointments. We are disappointed with other people, with God, and a lot of time with ourselves. We have all been "shrunk" by our own foolishness and sin, but that of others, or even by mysterious things that we will never be able to understand or explain.

We have a choice: live with shrunken stories or find the Magnificent Story. (I remember learning how to do laundry in college and ended up with a shrunken shirt after leaving it in the dryer for a few hours.)

We cannot redeem our shrunken stories on our own. BUT we can have the One who does have a Magnificent Story scoop us up into His story. We can move away from our own shrunken stories.

An Asbury member told me we must watch the movie, "Mully." It was great advice. This is one of the most inspirational and incredible movies I have ever seen. Mully's father in Kenya was an under-employed and abusive alcoholic who beat his wife and neglected his family. As a little boy, Mully woke up one morning and discovered his father, mother and brother had abandoned him. Left completely alone, Mully became a street boy. He survived as a child by begging and stealing. A kind woman from India gave him a menial job. He worked hard at it. In six months, he was supervising others. One success led to another, and he became a millionaire. However, his life took a surprising twist. Instead of just enjoying his wealth, he gave his life to rescuing street kids and orphans. The 2017 film reported Mully had rescued over 12,000 children. If you want

to be amazed and inspired, watch “Mully.” One determined man not only survived, but he also thrived. He worked hard, had faith, and became an instrument of blessing to thousands. Miracles seem to happen best when we put our faith into action. Mully, like Abram, was blessed. Abram became a blessing to others, too. *I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.* (Genesis 12:2-3)

### 3 ways to Bless Others

- 1) Get/read the BOOK. This effort will bless you! We have some available at for \$10 @ the CLC.
- 2) Start a SMALL GROUP or to be in a small group. The book is wonderful, but this study should be as much about hospitality and invitation as it is about study. Many of us have far more content than application or practice. Top line says, “What do I get out of this?” Bottom line says, “Who can I invite?” Invite some friends. Make some new friends. Do not feel like you must know all the answers. Pay attention to others. Ask questions. Listening may be the best form of witnessing.
- 3.) Show HOSPITALITY. The Church grows when we

JESUS invites you into a relationship with The Magnificent Story now. He is beautiful, good, and true. Top line – we are invited into this relationship. Bottom line – we must respond.